

things that we permit that no other country in the world would permit? How could we explain that we gave people the freedom to succeed, and we created conditions in which millions abuse that freedom to destroy the things that make life worth living and life itself? We cannot.

And so I say to you today, my fellow Americans, you gave me this job, and we're making progress on the things you hired me to do. But unless we deal with the ravages of crime and drugs and violence and unless we recognize that it's due to the breakdown of the family, the community, and the disappearance of jobs, and unless we say some of this cannot be done by Government, because we have to reach deep inside to the values, the spirit, the soul, and the truth of human nature, none of the other things we seek to do will ever take us where we need to go.

So in this pulpit, on this day, let me ask all of you in your heart to say we will honor the life and the work of Martin Luther King, we will honor the meaning of our church, we will somehow by God's grace, we will turn this around. We will give these children a future. We will take away their guns and give them books. We will take away their despair and give them hope. We will rebuild the families and the neighborhoods and the communities. We won't make all the work that has gone on here benefit just a few. We will do it together by the grace of God.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:51 a.m. at the Mason Temple Church of God in Christ. In his remarks, he referred to Elsie Mason, widow of Charles Harrison Mason, founder, Church of God in Christ, and the following officers of the denomination: Louis Ford, presiding bishop; Chandler David Owens, first assistant presiding bishop; Cleveland L. Anderson, second assistant presiding bishop; L.T. Walker and Donnie Lindsey, Arkansas jurisdictional bishops; and Philip A. Brooks, general board member from Detroit, MI. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Memphis

November 13, 1993

Thank you for that wonderful welcome. Thank you for your sign about NAFTA. I didn't give it to her, I promise. [Laughter] Reverend Whalen, it's wonderful to be in your church, and I thank you for hosting this townhall meeting. Last year Reverend Whalen accepted my invitation to come to Arkansas to the Governor's mansion and to meet with me about a number of the problems you'll be discussing today. And it's good to see him again. He came to my house, and I'm in his house now.

I want to thank my good friend Harold Ford who started helping me in my quest to become President early and, long before that, worked with me to help reform the welfare laws to give people both the obligation to work and the opportunity to grow and thrive. And the two things go together, and I thank Harold Ford for that. I'm glad to be here with Congressman Clement and with Congressman Jim Cooper. I'm glad to see them both up here talking. I was especially glad to see Jim talking because he's going to come back and ask you for a promotion next year, and he needed to get warmed up here, and I like that. I'm glad our good friend Congressman Jefferson came all the way from New Orleans to be with us today. That was good. Mayor Morris, it's good to see you. And I saw Mayor Herenton earlier today.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to my good friend Governor McWherter. I think he's one of the finest Governors in the country, and a person could never ask for a better friend. And I thank you. We were out in the wind at the airport announcing the support of several Members of Congress for the North American Free Trade Agreement. And Congressman Jefferson from New Orleans, who didn't know Governor McWherter very well, looked at him and said, "You were probably a better Governor than Bill Clinton, and you're certainly a better windbreaker than he was." [Laughter]

Let me say, too, you know, this town hall meeting was scheduled before I announced that I was coming here to speak to the annual convention of the Church of God in Christ. And Congressman Ford invited me to come by; I wanted to come. The leader of our office of drug policy and a member of my Cabinet, Lee Brown, is here, and he'll be speaking after I leave. I'm going to introduce him as I go. Lee was the police chief in Atlanta, in Houston, and in New York and really pioneered the development of community policing in our country and proved that if you not only had enough police officers but if you deployed them in the right way, you could actually prevent crime from occurring as well as catch criminals more quickly. And in preventing crime from occurring, you could build bridges in neighborhoods and put lives back together and put communities back together.

So I want to implore you not to turn this into just a speechmaking event. This is a discussion of crime and violence as a public health issue. It affects you and your lives and the lives of your children. So when I go, you stay. Will you do that? I want you to be a part of this. This is important.

I want you to know why this is such a big issue to me as an American, a husband, a father, as well as President. I got elected President on some very basic commitments. I said that I would try to get the economy going again. I said I would try to restore the middle class and give hope to the poor by rewarding work and supporting families. I said that I would try to bring the country together again, across the line of region and income and race, so that we could work together to ensure a better future for everyone.

Now, in the last 10 months we've worked hard largely on the economy, to get the deficit down, to keep inflation down, to get interest rates down. That means investment's up. I don't know, I bet there are a lot of people in this room even who were able to refinance a home in the last year. Millions of Americans have done that, lowered their monthly payments. In the last 10 months the economy has produced more jobs in the private sector than in the previous 4 years.

But we all know that's not enough, we have to do more. I came here to support the North

American Free Trade Agreement today for a simple reason and that is that our workers are becoming more productive and more competitive. They have to survive in the world. But productivity means that the same person can produce more in the same or less time. Right? So if fewer people are producing more stuff, the only way you can create more jobs and higher incomes is if you have more customers for the things you're producing.

So that's very important; this trade agreement's important to me. But when you get through all of that, you have to come back to the fact that this country is going to have a very hard time making it unless we do something about this wave of crime and violence that's tearing the heart out of America. And it affects everybody who thinks they're not affected by it. It affects you in many ways by forcing you as taxpayers to pay a lot more money to put people in the penitentiary than you otherwise would. You know, this country now has a higher percentage of people in prison than any other country in the world. Do you know that? That's something we're number one in. And we know that in spite of that, a lot of people get out before they should.

It means that you pay more in health care. Why? Because this really is a public health problem. I have spent years studying the American health care system and trying to figure out why we spend 40 or 50 percent more than anybody else on health care and we still can't figure out how to give health care to everybody. And I'll tell you one reason. One reason is that on any given night, our emergency rooms are filled with people that are cut up and shot, who don't have any health insurance, and the rest of us pay for it.

Now, that's not the number one—we ought to be concerned about them and others. I don't mean that on a human level. But you just need to know that if you say to me 4 years from now, "Mr. President, why haven't you brought our health care costs more in line with everybody else's and given health care to everybody?" If you want the costs brought into line we're going to have to stop shooting and cutting each other up so much. It's a big health care issue. You

can't blame the doctors, and you can't blame the hospitals, and you can't blame—even though I get crossways with them from time to time, this is not the insurance companies' fault. This is society. When people show up bleeding and shot, there they are. Right? So this is a huge public health problem.

But more importantly, it's doing something just awful to our country. The other day I met with my good friend the Mayor of Baltimore, when I was up at Johns Hopkins Medical Center talking to them about our health care plan. And he told me that the night before he had had to visit a home of an 18-year-old boy who was a fine young man that went out every Halloween for years with real young kids so they could go trick-or-treating safely in the neighborhood. And they were walking down the street and crossed the street. There was a 14-year-old boy with a gun and a 13-year-old boy without one. And the 14-year-old handed the 13-year-old the gun and dared him to shoot across the street at the 18-year-old. And he did, and he killed him.

That kind of stuff happens all the time. In our Nation's Capital the other day a man came along the street and grabbed up a little 1-year-old girl, put her in a seat beside him, and sped off in a car. And some people who were after him ran after him, started shooting. They shot him dead. The bullet went through his body and hit the little girl, went down through her foot, and blew her little bootie off. A 1-year-old child.

In the Washington Post in our Nation's Capital the other day there was an article about children so convinced they would never grow up that, at the age of 11, they were planning their funerals. Little girl saying, "Well, now if I have a funeral, play these hymns at the church," and another one saying, "If I have a funeral, put me in this dress."

Now, it's going to be hard for me or any other President or any Member of Congress to organize this country with the private sector to compete and win in the global economy if we have the kind of public pathology we have today, where children are shooting children with weapons more advanced than the police have.

I come from across the river in Arkansas where we're about to start, or maybe they

have already started deer season, and sometimes we shut the schools and the factories down at the opening of deer season because nobody shows up anyway. [Laughter] I understand all about the right to keep and bear arms, and I was in the woods when I was barely old enough to walk. But I'm telling you, no sane society would allow teenagers to have semiautomatic weapons and go in the streets and be better armed than the police officers. That's crazy. And nobody else does. Only we do. We have to ask ourselves, what are we going to do about this? How did this happen? And I think, frankly, if we're going to find the answers, we're going to have to all check a lot of our baggage at the door. We've got to check our partisan political baggage; we've got to check our racial identities; we've got to check everything at the door. We've just got to be honest children of God and honest Americans and try to analyze how did we get in the fix we're in in this country and what are we going to do about it.

And I have to tell you, I spent time, I talked to a lot of young people who were and some who are in gangs. I once had someone go down to the penitentiary and interview every teenager who was there doing a life sentence for murder. Long before I ever thought of running for President I went to south central Los Angeles, which later became famous when it burned down. A couple of years before I ever thought of even getting in this race, just sat in church basements and places like that and talked to people about what was going on. And nearly as I can determine, what has happened is a combination of the following. Number one, too many of these kids are growing up without family supports, without the structure and value and support they need.

Number two, too many of those kids also have no substitute for the family that's positive. The word "gang" has a bad connotation now. The truth is we all want to be in gangs, if a gang is a group of people who think like you do and do like you do. What's the difference? The Baptist Church and the Church of God in Christ are two different gangs who still want to get to heaven when they die. Right? I mean, really, you think about that. What's the difference in the Democrats and the Republicans? They're two different

gangs, and they obey the law, and they vote election day, and they've got different ideas about how to solve problems. This is very important to understand. We all want to be part of groups. And we get meaning out of our lives from being part of groups.

When Tennessee beat Arkansas so bad this year in football, and the Vice President rubbed it in because we beat them last year, we were members of two different gangs. It was competition and friendly and wholesome and good. This is very important to understand. So if you take the family supports away from these kids, and then there is nothing where they live that puts them in a good gang, that's why they get in gangs that are bad. It's very important to understand that.

The third thing that has happened that is different from what happened 30 years ago when people were poor is that you not only have a worse family situation and no other community supports—I mean, 30 years ago, even when kids didn't grow up in intact families in poor neighborhoods, they still lived in places where on every block there was a role model. The person who owned the drug-store lived in the neighborhood. The person that owned the grocery store lived in the neighborhood. The people that filled the churches on Sunday lived in the neighborhoods where they went to church. And the third thing that's happened is, weekend drunks have been substituted by permanent drug addicts and drug salesmen. Abuse of alcohol has been replaced by a drug culture that makes some people's money destroying other people's lives. It's different. And it is not simple or easy, what to do about it. Mr. Brown's going to talk more about that in a minute.

The fourth thing that has happened is that the central organizing principle of any advanced society has been evaporated, and that is work. Forget about work in and of itself, to earn money and contribute to the rest of our wealth. If you don't have work in neighborhoods and in communities, it is hard for people to organize their lives. It is hard for parents to feel self-esteem. It is hard for them to feel confident giving their kids rules to live by. It is hard for the relationship between the parent and the child to work just right. It is hard for the child to look out and

imagine that by working hard things will work out all right.

And there are lots of other problems. But I'm convinced that those are the four biggest ones: the breakdown of the family, the breakdown of other community supports, the rise of drugs—it's not just in terms of drug abuse but in terms of a way to get rich—and the absence of work.

And I believe that in order to deal with this, we're going to have to all work together in a whole new national contract. But I believe this is an economic issue. I think it's a public health issue. I think it's a national security issue. And besides that, I'm just tired of trying to explain to myself when I go to bed at night why so many American kids aren't going to make it when they ought to.

So there are things for the Federal Government to do, the President, and the Congress. There are things for the States to do, things for the local folks to do. There are things the private sector has to do. And there are certainly things for the churches to do. But I want to submit to you that there are things that every American citizen's going to have to do.

This family breakdown problem has developed over 30 years. It didn't just happen overnight. The community erosion developed over a long period of time. We cannot rebuild all these institutions overnight, but we can start saving these kids, in the words of a good friend of mine, the same way we lost them, one at a time, which means that there's something for all of us to do here. There is something for all of us to do. And we need both love and discipline. We need both investment in these kids and our future, and we need rules by which people live. We need both. It's not an either/or thing.

That's why I say that I think if we really work at it, we can get beyond the Republican, Democrat; who's a liberal, who's a conservative; who's black, Hispanic, or white. This is a huge human problem for America. And we have to face it. I believe that my daughter's future is limited every time another child gets shot in any community in this country. That's what I believe. Every time a kid in Memphis is deprived of a future, I think it limits all the rest of us. That's what I believe. If we believe that, I think we can

get there. And let me just suggest where I think we have to start nationally.

The first thing we have to do is to try to make people more secure. Until people are physically secure, it is difficult to get them to change and to do other things. We have a crime bill now moving through the Congress, which would, among other things, put another 100,000 police officers on the street. It's important not only to put them on the street but to have them trained and to have them properly deployed. As Lee Brown will tell you, if you do it right, you can reduce the crime rate and you can prevent crime and repair lives even as you are catching criminals more quickly. We should start there.

I think we ought to pass the crime bill because it offers boot camps instead of penitentiaries for first-time offenders. I think we need to do something to increase the safety of our schools; 160,000 children stay home every day because they're afraid of school. One in five children goes to school every day armed with a knife, a gun, or a club, every day. We've got to change that.

I think we have to provide as much as we can an environment in which the police have a chance to do their job and in which kids are not encouraged to kill each other. There are three bills now being considered in the Congress as a part of this crime bill that I favor. One says that if you're not old enough to go to war or vote, you ought not to be old enough to have a handgun legally, and protects the right to hunt and practice by saying that young people under the supervision of their parents or other appropriate adults can do that. The other bill is the Brady bill, which says that we ought to have a waiting period and check out people's criminal history and mental health history before we just sell them a gun. And a third bill basically says that people ought not to buy in ordinary commerce automatic and semiautomatic weapons, the only purpose of which is to kill other people. Now, no other country would permit that to happen. I think those things should pass. This crime bill is working its way through the Senate, has passed the House, could be given to the American people for Christmas, and I think we ought to do it. That's where we need to start.

Then we need to recognize, as we did in our health care bill, that you have got to have not only drug education and drug treatment on demand without delay. And we ought not be putting people out of the penitentiary unless they get drug treatment when they need it. And we ought to let this country go forward.

There are many American families that are not poor, that are not in the inner cities that have been touched by the problems of drug abuse. But I can tell you, and there is no simple, easy answer to this, and nothing works for everybody, but good drug treatment does work more than half the time. And we don't provide it. And we're all paying for it. So we need to work on that. And we have an obligation there at the national level.

We also have got to find a way to work with the private sector, even though we are in serious trouble in terms of having enough money to do anything in this country, we have got to find useful work for people who live in dangerous, distressed, dysfunctional areas. We have got to give structure, order, and discipline to lives again through work. We have got to do it.

The last thing I would say to you is that we can do these things at the national level. But we have to give these kids hope again. We have to give their families hope again. We have to give their parents who are trying hope again. I stopped in that housing project, like Harold said. It may be one of the poorest places in this town, but I know that most people who live in that housing project do not break the law, do not abuse drugs, and are doing the best they can. And a lot of people forget that. A lot of people forget that. So that's something you're going to have to do. That's your job.

I live in Washington; you live in Memphis. You've got to do that here. You've got to do that. You've got to do it through the churches, through the businesses, through the community groups. You've got to help slowly but surely get this society back to a point where families can be reconstituted, where there can be supports for kids that don't have families so they're in a good gang, not a bad gang. We can do this, folks.

And people have been talking about this for years, but this is the first time in my mem-

ory that I think the American people are about fed up to their ears in it, scared to death about what's happening to our children and their future, and understand that it affects all the rest of us. We can do this. We can do this.

I'll make this pledge to you: If you'll work on it here, I'll work on it there. I can no longer justify knowing that there's something I can do to make people safer on the streets and not doing it. I can no longer justify knowing there are things we can do that work to reduce the drug problem and not doing it. I can no longer justify going to bed at night thinking about these children killing other children, thinking about these little kids planning their funerals and not doing something about it. We can do this. And keep in mind, you're working with the same material that's inside you. These are people we're talking about. We can turn this country around if we'll check our divisions at the door, rely on what unites us, and go to work.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

Now, before I go, I want to introduce the man who is affectionately called the drug czar. It makes him sound like he sells drugs instead of stops them, doesn't it? [Laughter] Dr. Lee Brown grew up in California. As I said, he was the police chief in Atlanta, Houston, and New York. He instituted a program of community policing in New York City, where the police went back on the beat, started walking in the neighborhoods. And despite all the preconceptions, according to the FBI statistics in the last 2 years the crime rate in New York City went down in all seven major FBI categories, because they started giving the police force back to the neighborhoods and the people and working with friends and neighborhoods to try to stop bad things from happening and catch people who do them when they do. That is a remarkable thing.

I asked him to come on to my administration, and I pledged to him that I would make the Drug Policy Director a member of the President's Cabinet and that we would get every last Department of the Federal Government working on the drug problem because I thought he had a comprehensive view. I thought he understood how you can't just divide drugs from all these other issues,

that we had to deal with all this together, we had to start at the grassroots level, and that we could really get something done if we had creative, good people working hard. He's a remarkable man. I am deeply honored that he's in our Cabinet. I hope you will welcome him here today and stay here and participate. Remember, you've got to do your part, too. He's here to help you.

Thank you very much. Dr. Lee Brown.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at the Olivet Baptist Church. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Haiti

November 13, 1993

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

1. In December 1990, the Haitian people elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide as their President by an overwhelming margin in a free and fair election. The United States praised Haiti's success in peacefully implementing its democratic constitutional system and provided significant political and economic support to the new government. The Haitian military abruptly interrupted the consolidation of Haiti's new democracy when in September 1991, it illegally and violently ousted President Aristide from office and drove him into exile.

2. The United States, on its own and with the Organization of American States (OAS), immediately imposed sanctions against the illegal regime. The United States has also actively supported the efforts of the OAS and the United Nations to restore democracy to Haiti and bring about President Aristide's return by facilitating negotiations between the Haitian parties. The United States and the international community also offered material assistance within the context of an eventual negotiated settlement of the Haitian crisis to support the return to democracy, build constitutional structures, and foster economic well-being.

3. My last report detailed asset freezes and entry prohibitions that I ordered be imposed against individuals associated with the illegal